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Heroin airlift

To the Editor: In response to your Sept. 19 editorial denouncing the charges Sen. McGovern directed at the Nixon Administration's involvement in the Southeast Asian opium traffic, I feel it my duty to inform you that McGovern's charges are not "innuendoes without verified facts," as you stated.

There is undeniable evidence that American funds and equipment have been utilized to transport raw opium from field to refinery in Southeast Asia's golden triangle region.

Gen. Ovan Rathikun, former commander-in-chief of the Laotian army, has publicly admitted his own involvement in the opium business and has discussed the cooperation he has re-

ceived from the CIA. Ronald Rickenbach, a former USAID representative in Laos, has testified that he personally watched hundreds of pounds of raw opium being loaded onto a Laotian air force aircraft, which in reality is an American aircraft paid for by American taxpayers.

Alfred W. McCoy, in his forthcoming book "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia," has interviewed scores of people directly involved in the drug traffic of Southeast Asia, and all evidence indicates that the CIA, the American embassies in Southeast Asian countries, and the Administration itself, are not as innocent and law-abiding as they would have us believe. And for our President to brag about rising heroin prices on the East Coast as an indication of increased government vigilance is pure hogwash. Is Mr. Nixon happy that the pushers are making more money now? Is he happy that addicts are suffering more and stealing more from our communities to pay for the higher priced heroin?

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